UNDP

update

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news & events

New York. In his opening remarks on 7 June to UNDP's Governing Council, meeting here for its 38th session, UNDP Administrator William H. Draper III said that after five years of self-reflection and change at UNDP, some guiding principles had emerged. Leading the list is the need to judge development in terms of people -- how it makes their lives better and more meaningful. "For development to last," he said, "people must be at the centre of the process: not only men but women, not only governments but grassroots and non-governmental organizations, not only the public sector but private institutions and entrepreneurs."

"Economic growth is necessary for human development," Mr. Draper said, "but even at low-income levels much can be done by reallocating existing resources and ensuring human freedom and human rights."

Secondly, he said, we must recognize the natural environment as the source of sustenance for human and other life. "We must build societies in which the preservation of the environment is regarded with as much urgency as the preservation of accustomed lifestyles," Mr. Draper said. "Over the long term, it is human deprivation and environmental neglect that would undermine any efforts towards a better world."

Thirdly, Mr. Draper said that the success or failure of development ultimately lies with the developing countries themselves. "While industrialized countries are not absolved of responsibility, in the end development hinges on a country's political will and on the strength of its own human resources."

While admitting that national and international institutions are slow to change, Mr. Draper said that UNDP had come a long way. He said that a number of important ideas are now being put into motion, including the strengthening of national execution and the decentralization of UNDP activities.

Geneva. A meeting which convened here on 17 June focused on the educational requirements of refugees, returnees and displaced persons now residing in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Representatives from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNDP, UNICEF and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, along with participants from numerous NGOs, deliberated on ways to help these vulnerable groups meet their basic learning needs and attain useful skills. The initiative is a follow-up activity to last year's "World Conference on Education for All", which was held in Jomtien, Thailand.

As many as five million refugees, returnees and displaced persons are thought to reside in these African countries. At least two million are children. Along with food, shelter and medical supplies, the educational needs of these uprooted populations have become a priority to their host governments and to international aid agencies. A mission to examine the educational requirements of these groups in the three countries was carried out with support from UNDP. Assessments from it were reviewed in Geneva with an eye towards creating a future programme.

Geneva. Nearly 60 UN Volunteers (UNVs) are now serving in or en route to the Middle East to take part in the many relief operations that are now underway. The UNVs, who are specialists in such fields as epidemiology, nutrition, environmental health and agriculture, are being deployed to refugee sites in Iraq, Iran, Syria and Turkey. In Iran, and along Turkey's southern border, Iraqi refugees -- mostly Kurds -- number 1.5 million. The UNVs will serve short-term assignments averaging about three months.

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"UNVs have worked with refugees and in disaster situations for many years, but this is only the second time that we've had to respond rapidly for short-term emergency assistance," says Brenda McSweeney, executive co-ordinator of UNVs in Geneva. "It is also the largest such deployment we've done," she says.

Several UN agencies are involved in the relief effort, including UNHCR, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Food Programme. Also playing an important role is Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, the UN Secretary-General's Executive Delegate, who recommended that UNVs take part in the operation. Support for the UNVs has so far come from Japan, which has provided $1.2 million, and from UNDP, which has allocated $250,000.

Geneva. At a landmark meeting co-sponsored by UNDP and WHO's Global Programme on AIDS, representatives of 18 major pharmaceutical companies agreed to collaborate with WHO in the development of drugs and vaccines to help fight the disease. "This is an important initiative," says Tim Rothermel, Director of UNDP's Division for Global and Interregional Programmes. "We're very interested in promoting co-operation between public and private sectors in this cause."

Opening the meeting, WHO's Director-General Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima appealed to the participants "to think innovatively as an industry, not as competing companies, about what can be done to ensure that vaccines and drugs against AIDS are developed and produced at a cost all can afford."

Industry representatives pledged their continued support to the effort and to speed research and development. The meeting also endorsed WHO's strategy of placing heavy emphasis on health education so that more people can learn how to protect themselves and others from AIDS. A plan to strengthen testing centres in developing countries for HIV/AIDS vaccines and drugs, and to ensure that they operate under strict ethical guidelines, was also supported.

By early 1991, an estimated eight million adults and one million children worldwide had become infected with the HIV virus. Of those, WHO estimates that at least 1.5 million have gone on to develop AIDS. WHO is now projecting that 40 million people will be infected with HIV by the year 2000. This is an increase over its earlier estimates and is attributed to a sharp rise in infection in sub-Saharan Africa and in southeast Asia.

projects approved by the action committee

(all approvals subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

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Central African Republic. Follow-up assistance from UNDP will help preserve the country's rich biodiversity and wildlife. Under the project, rural populations will be made aware of conservation issues and the effects of poaching. New policies and legislation will be devised aimed at promoting better management of the country's wildlife resources. The Training Center for Game Wardens of Bamingui will be upgraded. Proposed UNDP contribution, co-financed with the World Bank: $2,040,160, of which $817,000 is government cost-sharing. Funds will pay for a wildlife management expert, UNV specialists, fellowships and equipment. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) is executing the project. It is being implemented by the Ministry of Water, Forestry, Wildlife and Tourism. (CAF/91/004)

China. Improved health care and modernized medical facilities for the Chinese is the goal of this project. UNDP will assist the North China Research Institute of Electro-optics in Beijing in designing prototypes for high quality laser instruments for medical use and mass production. Properly equipped laboratories needed to manufacture the basic components for medical lasers will also be established. Proposed UNDP contribution: $1,950,000 for experts, equipment, fellowships and study tours. Government-executed and implemented by the China International Center of

Economic and Technical Exchanges in association with the UN Industrial Development Organization. (CPR/89/005)

Cook Islands. The Cook Islands was hit hard by Cyclone Peni early this year. For future prevention, UNDP will help raise land levels and construct protective seawalls and breakwaters in the main island. In the outer islands, damaged schools, agricultural systems and an airport will be rehabilitated. Funds of $300,000 from UNDP's Special Programme Resources are to pay for a UNV engineer, cement, wire mesh and electrical and agricultural supplies. Government-executed and implemented cooperatively by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Works, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Energy. (CKI/90/003)

Indonesia. Through institution building and training, UNDP follow-up assistance will boost the development of Indonesia's eastern region, where private investments are low and widespread poverty persists. The planning and management capabilities of numerous District Development Planning Boards and government agencies will be improved, so that they can better prepare and carry out regional development activities. Proposed UNDP contribution: $3,711,000, of which $1,116,000 represents third-party cost-sharing from the Netherlands. Funds are to pay for a chief technical adviser, an institutional development specialist, workshops and training. Government-executed and implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs, National Development Planning Board, and the Ministry of Public Works. (INS/88/032)

Madagascar. UNDP will help carry out the final stages of a nationwide population census earlier supported by the UN Population Fund and the US Agency for International Development. The census will provide decision-makers with reliable demographic data for development planning. Proposed UNDP contribution: $1,975,610, of which $1,130,014 is government cost-sharing. Funds are to pay for a census adviser, data processors, reporting and logistical costs. Executed by the UN Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and implemented by the Direction Général de la Banque des Données. (MAG/91/002)

Paraguay. After decades of authoritarian rule, Paraguay is now embracing democratic reforms and is seeking to improve the social and economic conditions of its people. UNDP will help the government increase community participation in development activities, create a national network of women's organizations and provide meals to school children, the disabled and elderly. One thousand vegetable gardens established and managed by women's groups, and tended by school children, will also be created. Proposed UNDP contribution: $600,000. Government cost-sharing: $4,800,000. Funds will pay for experts in social development, equipment, food supplies, training and logistical support. The World Food Programme is contributing 2,370 tonnes of powdered milk. The project is government-executed and implemented by the Directorate of Welfare and Social Aid. (PAR/91/004)

Regional project:

Arab States and Europe. UNDP will help promote technical co-operation among the Arab Maghreb countries in carrying out genetic research to develop high-yielding and disease-resistant varieties of cereals and legumes. The aim is to help Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia regain self-sufficiency in producing these food crops. Harsh climatic conditions and plant disease have led to a steady decline in production during the past two decades. The project will also benefit from expertise provided by the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas. Proposed UNDP contribution: $1,298,000 for regional training courses, fellowships, workshops, international seminars, laboratory equipment and logistical support costs. Executed by the Government of Morocco and implemented by the agriculture ministries of participating countries. (RAB/91/007)

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Somalia. This project revision expands logistical and management support for UN emergency operations across Somalia where political instability and civil strife have displaced a large number of citizens. The project will assist in monitoring health and nutritional conditions, procuring and transporting supplies and co-ordinating emergency operations. Assessments of additional emergency needs will also be made to assist in the country's reconstruction and rehabilitation. Proposed UNDP contribution for this revision: $1,680,415 for experts, transport, equipment and subcontract. Executed by UNDP's Office for Project Services. (SOM/90/023)

Tunisia. UNDP support will improve the outreach capabilities of agricultural extension workers through training, and will thereby assist small rural farmers, especially women, increase harvests and productivity. Self-help initiatives in farm communities will be encouraged, as well as private investments. Proposed UNDP contribution: $1 million. Government cost-sharing: $700,000. Funds are to pay for agriculture specialists, consultants, training and monitoring of extension activities. Executed by FAO and implemented by the National Extension Agency. (TUN/90/005)

staff movements

Finn Tore Rose, until recently Deputy Resident Representative in Viet Nam, was appointed Resident Representative in Algeria. He succeeds **Gulatiero Fulcheri** who retired at the end of last year. Mr. Rose's previous assignments include serving as Deputy Resident Representative in Mozambique, Senior Programme Adviser in the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific and Assistant Resident Representative in Zambia. Mr. Rose arrived in Algiers on 16 May 1991.

Ross Mountain, former acting Resident Representative in Afghanistan, was designated Resident Representative in Liberia upon reassignment of **Michael Heyn** to Malawi. Mr. Mountain previously served as Senior Information Liaison Officer in Geneva and then Deputy Resident Representative in Fiji. Mr. Mountain arrived in Monrovia on 19 May 1991.

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